

NYC Citizen Review Panel (CRP) for Child Protective Services

Meeting Summary September 14, 2021 • 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Attendees:

Eastern Panel Members

Carrie Smith

Western Panel Members

Guests

David Haase, OCFS

Dave Bach, OCFS

NYC Panel Members

Stanley Capela

Wayne Ho

Mathea Rubin

Welfare Research, Inc.

Jennifer Goldman

Ellen Unruh

Jason Tessolecki

Handouts

NYC Meeting Agenda 9.14.21

Draft NYC CRP Meeting Minutes 5.17.21

Illinois Child Welfare Stipend Program

Reports During COVID-19/Journal of Race & Law

Welcome – Stanley Capela

Jennifer Goldman introduced Jason Tessolecki, WRI staff who will be helping out with CRP.

Updates from NYS Office of Children & Family Services

Malicious Reporting:

OCFS reported that the SCR does not have a script for malicious callers; however procedures are in place. If it is suspected that a caller is making repeated, malicious calls, the State Central Register (SCR) places that caller's number on the malicious caller list. When that number comes up, it automatically is routed to a SCR supervisor. The supervisor identifies themselves as a supervisor and reminds the caller they are being recorded and that false claims are misdemeanors, which may be investigated by the District Attorney (DA). Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) are also aware of repetitive allegations/callers.

Workforce Workgroup:

The Workforce Workgroup presented at the NYPWA summer conference and gave an overview of their purpose and next steps. The Department of Civil Service (DCS) discussed the importance of cooperation between the LDSS and DCS. Counties expressed that continuous recruitment has been very helpful, and subject matter experts are being hired to identify if current testing refers to current job qualifications. A video has been created to recruit workers, and OCFS has also released an interactive map to help with recruitment, as well as a media toolkit. OCFS sent a survey to counties regarding recruitment efforts.

Racial Bias in the Child Welfare System:

OCFS is over two years into a new oversight and monitoring process and is monitoring each county on a three-year schedule, using standardized tools. OCFS is also examining the data to establish benchmarks to determine areas needing improvement. The blind removal process is being implemented statewide, and OCFS is planning an evaluation in 2022. A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Director is being hired by OCFS; this is a high-level position and should be filled shortly.

Fatality Reports:

OCFS is currently posting fatality reports to their website, launched in June. By February of 2022, every report from 2015 until the most recent quarter that have been finalized will be posted. Not every report gets published due to best interest of surviving siblings, or if a DA requests that a report be withheld due to an active investigation. Any identifying factors are removed from the report prior to publishing. If a report is not posted at this link, it cannot be requested.

Debrief

Panel members viewed the new CRP video, introducing the work of the panels and interests/goals.

Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided an update on collaboration with Prevent Child Abuse NY and Assemblymember Hevesi to support the statewide expansion of Family Assessment Response. Assemblymember Hevesi is still interested in pursuing the expansion, and additional meetings will be scheduled in the future.

The Panel Members discussed possible topics for the upcoming Joint Meeting and 2021 Annual Report.

Panel members discussed strategies to introduce the Panels to Governor Hochul.

Meeting adjourned: 10:53 a.m.

Next meeting: Joint Panel/October 14, 2021